

BERLIN, May 7.

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THE LANCASHIRE COTTON STRIKE

(From the Financier.)

CONSIDERING that the strike in the cotton districts of North and East Carolina involves the stoppage of one-fourth of the production in this part of the regular branch of textiles, it may be looked upon almost in the light of a national misfortune. The numbers who are thrown out of work are so large, the hindrance to the country so great, and the ultimate effect on the trade so complete, and the ultimate effect on the people so bad, that it is not surprising that the public mind should feel that it must necessarily follow if the strike be persevered in, will be so widespread, that such an event would at any time be most serious, but it becomes much more so, and the ultimate effect on the people of such universal depression, for it shows how utterly unreasoning are the operatives, and what power their unions have over them, one which, at the present time, is very far from good. It is not surprising that thought that, now-a-days, when the questions of strikes are so freely debated, and when advice of all classes is so extensively furnished on the working class, that they should be so completely misled.

impulsiveness which a quarrel might have been patient even to the most provoked; but although the representatives have argued the point at issue with the political economy that is a characteristic of the times, there seems no real improvement in the capability of themselves or their leaders to discern the true nature of the situation and the prospects of success. In this particular case, the leaders among whom Mr. Hirst, of Accrington, has been especially prominent in stirring up the operative class to strike, are men who are not only in the wrong, but they appear to have become rather frightened at the storm which they have raised, and have expressed the opinion that the people should judge for themselves whether the strike is worth the sacrifice which they are not the first who have found it easier to provoke the passions of the multitude than to guide them when roused. That the state of the cotton industry is not so gloomy as is represented on every day by the adverse balance-sheets of manufacturing houses. Out of twenty-five companies in the Ashton and Oldham districts (according to *Cottons and Woollens*), only five are in a state of liquidation; the profits, sixteen have lost in the aggregate £68,91, the profit made by the other nine amounts to only £41,67. These companies were paying old dividend on an average of 10 per cent, and the dividends they are most of them second or third year. The companies who would naturally be the hard times sufferers were those who had older and better capital, and severe pressure which they are undergoing. From another source we learn that about 20 of these com-

ports have taken stock within the present year, and that the average loss is £500, or a total of £15,000. The area which is involved in the present disaster is a very large one, commencing in the extreme north of the Palatinat, with the town of Lancaster itself, and including Preston, Blackburn, Darwen, Church, Accrington, Haslingden, Burnley, Colne, Clitheroe, Padiham, Chorley, and many other populous cotton villages, which know no other trade but that of spinning and weaving. A few of the masters in these districts have

not determined on the 11 per cent. reduction, but the number of those who are running at the usual rate of wages is extremely small. The following rough table will show the condition of the districts on strike:—

	Looms idle.	Spindles idle.
Preston	80,000	2,800,000
Blackburn	64,000	2,000,000
Barnley	27,000	—
Accrington	—	—
Church, &c.	5000	1,000,000
Darwen	15,000	—
Total	186,000	5,800,000

Between 100,000 and 1,100,000 spindles are at work.

between 120,000 and 150,000 operatives are now unemployed in these localities, and it must be remembered that, as the consequence of a strike of such magnitude would not be confined to the district, for the cotton towns outside, such as Oldham, Ashton, Bolton, and Burry would seriously feel it, and it would not be too much to say the production of more than half the kingdom would be affected. It is true that the enforced limitation of production to such an extent may create a temporary artificial stimulus for the large stock on hand, but it cannot bring about a radical change in the situation.

improvement of trade, which can only result from causes beyond the action of the operatives. The truth is, that a reduction is a matter of dire necessity, not as some of the speakers at the Blackburn meeting stated, "that the cotton masters might continue to keep their carriages and their hanging gardens of Babylon," but that many of the cotton mills might be enabled to hold on for bare life, though a depression unexampled in severity, and which, in the case of war might be prolonged to an indefinite extent. The orators on the side of the "hands" strenuously deny

that there is any foreign competition; and also pointed to the fact, that, while other branches of industry have received large advances of wages, those of the North and East Lancashire have remained stationary, notwithstanding the great rise in all the necessities of life. A spinner, writing to the *Manchester Guardian*, points out, however, that before the American war the legal hours of working for weavers was sixty per week, against fifty-six and a half as at present, and that this is tantamount to an increased earning of from 25 to 33 per cent. In America, wages have

undergo a greater lowering than in this country, and even then the mills have the greatest difficulty in making their way. Another favourite argument with their lenders is, that the reduction in wages would only cheapen cotton goods to such an infinitesimal extent that it is absurd to suppose that it would induce any fresh orders. It is true, as one of the speakers stated, that to cheapen a pair of shirts by seven-eighths of a penny is not calculated to cause a rush of buyers for the shirts, nor would it as a matter of retail business. The

seven-eighths of a penny, however, becomes a mighty factor when the shirts, or whatever the goods are, are multiplied by thousands and millions, and will make all the difference between a profit and a loss to the manufacturer. Nor do the operatives take into consideration, when they demand a limiting of production by reducing the working hours, that any saving in this way would be more than counterbalanced by the fixed charges of the cotton mill, which during the days and hours of standing still are in proportion heavier than when the machinery is running full time. A cot-

ton mill, unless it is altogether laid by, is like a colliery only worked from time to time, or still better, like a large hotel, ready for visitors but having none. There is the wear and tear of plant, the rates and taxes, the staff of servants to keep things in order, the deterioration which always happens to idle furniture, and the unproductive capital during the time of non-working. As regards the workpeople themselves, the loss that will be entailed on them is terrible to think of. Taking the weavers alone, at an average of 6s. per week for every

loom standing idle, and which we have seen to amount to 142,000, we find a weekly loss of £30,000 in wages. It is almost impossible to calculate what that of spindles would be, as so many other departments in a cotton mill are immediately dependent on the spinners: but if we accept the estimate of 120,000 operatives as being out of work, and take an average of 15s. weekly wages, here is £90,000 lost to the hands. Whatever we may think of the factory *h-s* as themselves fighting for what they believe to be their rights, it is impossible to withhold sympathy for the wives

and families who will have to suffer in silence, and perhaps even more is due to the ratepayers and the trade-people of the districts on strike, who will have to pay the highest rates, while their trade will be ruined, and their charity called upon from hour to hour.

(From the Special Reporter of the Standard.)

MANCHESTER, APRIL 25.

After long reflection the Masters' Association have published an official manifesto, which every one out-

side their own body will be of opinion ought to have been the subject matter of discussion with a representative delegation of the operatives of the strike districts a month since, and in any case ought to have been issued at the moment the strike was imminent. It is true that it comes in the form of an answer to the statements which have been put forth on the part of the workpeople; but it none the less contains what the masters appear to think all the arguments that are necessary to be adduced in justification of the action they have taken.

If it had seen the light contemporaneously with the demand for the ten per cent. reduction, time would have been given for a fair consideration of the arguments on both sides of the questions at issue before the operatives took the step into which they have been to a great extent forced by the treatment they have received at the hands of their employers. The spirit which has actuated the confederation of the masters is only too evident from the language of their manifesto. We are told that in the present dispute there is "no room

for concession and therefore no ground for compromise." One would have thought that under these circumstances they were all the more bound to take every means in their power to satisfy the reason of those who would have to suffer such very serious consequences. It might fairly be inferred that from the beginning the masters have determined to attain their end by pressure, rather than by an appeal to the reason of men, who have throughout shown a spirit and a temper deserving great praise. Over and over again they have declared, through their leaders,

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Rain
 Rain and wind W
 Active storm
 Very heavy
 No report

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 C 5 20 10 F 16
 D 11 20 00 F 17
 E 5 20 10 F 16
 F 11 20 10 F 16
 G 11 20 10 F 16
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R. M. HICKS BEACH, M.P., ON THE COLONIES.

"vois," said in the short time Sir W. Jervois had administered the Government in South Australia, he did so well because he had exercised the English habit of speaking his mind, and telling the British the things which he thought were for their good. With his great knowledge of the means of defence there was no doubt he would enter more fully into the hearts of the colonists than ever when he returned. Sir W. Jervois, in replying, said there was great ignorance among the Australian people as to Great England and also as to England, and Australia.

When he first went to Australia it was with reference to the defence of the country. In pursuing his studies he came to the conclusion that South Australia was the key to the whole continent. He would refer first to the laying out of a railway to Melbourne and of communication with Adelaide, by which means it would come the Brindisi of Australia. They ought to have a harbour there which would enable large ships come there. They had already commenced a railway stretching from south to north, which would

valuable Australia, not only to Australis, but to the whole of the world. It is the only one in Port Darwin to Java, China, and the Eastern Hemisphere; and there might be some day a railway across the Malay peninsula, which would bring India within five days of North Australia. He looked upon it as leading to the federation of the whole Australian colonies, which must be a great advantage.

Mr. M. H. Beach, replying to the toast of "Great Britain and her Colonies," said the subject of this toast was no light thing. It was an empire unique in

history of the world—an empire not based upon the
 rejection of inferior races to conquering hordes, or
 rebellious slaves to severe despots, but an empire
 and together by the silken cords of sympathy and
 e—cords which oceans and continents could not
 divide; cords which would bind together in the
 future as they had in the past: England
 and her colonies to generations yet unborn.
 It was an empire and a race perhaps more qualified
 than any other for self-government, whose very breath
 was in the possession of free institutions, but who were

men pre-eminently before the peoples in this one age, in their love of the old country at home, and in their loyalty to the Crown. Some few years ago it was the fashion amongst advanced thinkers to decry the connection between great Britain and the colonies, and to speak of the latter as an incubus to Great Britain, and the connection as a risk, if not an actual danger, to our colonies themselves. He was glad to think that these ideas had been, for a time at any rate, dispelled by the common sense of Englishmen, and perhaps by some extension of that geographical study

When Sir W. Jervois had returned, and which
before long had torn even the public schoolboy
at the present at any rate, South Australia
possessed within itself something more than a ferina-
village. But they had been dissipated mainly
before all by the loyalty of the colonies to their
connection with the mother country, which
remained as strongly under the Australian sun as in
the snows of Canada. So long as England was
loyal to them would they be loyal to England. If
there was any truth in the idea of possible separation

When the colonies and the mother-country perhaps might see some signs of it in such a time as this, when the events that were happening from day to day seemed possibly a dangerous and difficult future to the whole Empire—a possible future which we might see and pray might never be realised, but which at that rate must be spoken of as a possibility. If there is any time when self-interest might guide our colonies to sever their connection with the mother-country that time would be on the possible eve of a great and terrible war. What had we seen? Why, the

per day to day throughout the colonies as danger appeared likely to increase or come near to the mother-
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maintained, and he ventured to think that the duty which the navy of England had performed in the past should be helped by our great commercial marine, and that of our colonies, who were worthy successors to those men who in the wars of this country in the earlier part of the present century showed that English merchantmen were not afraid to face the armed squadrons of the world at sea. There was another way in which England might be attacked, which was her undefended ports in the colonies. Australia had shown she was willing to undertake her own

and Sir W. Jervois had been engaged in a task the importance of which it was almost impossible to overrate. His great experience and knowledge had enabled him to effect a great work, and he (Sir M. H.) was permitted to say that her Majesty was so sensible of the manner in which his duty had been performed that it was her gracious intention to confer upon him the first class of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

sence of party rioting, provoked by the burning of Pope's allocutionary letter by a party of Orangemen on the Green. Several persons have been more severely hurt, and the police have taken into custody about twenty men who are alleged to have been conspicuously directing the movements of the tending parties.

Edward Mery, a leader of the Communists, said to have caused the death of Archbishop Ducroy, of Paris, was arrested for threatening the life of Harry W. ...

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